

EUROBAROMETER 67

PUBLIC OPINION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

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NATIONAL REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SLOVENIA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. LIFE IN SLOVENIA

Slovenians are satisfied with their life and are more optimistic about the future

Slovenians are more and more satisfied with their life - 91% of them have declared themselves as satisfied, which represents a 2 percentage point increase in comparison with the previous Eurobarometer (EB).

Slovenians are also more optimistic about their future than before. In comparison with the previous EB, six months ago, the percentage of those who think that their life will improve within the next 12 months has increased by seven percentage points. Therefore 34% of Slovenians think that their life will improve within the next year. The expectations of Slovenians regarding the improvement of the economic situation in Slovenia has also increased during the last six months – by five percentage points (28% of Slovenians think so). The majority of Slovenians expect no major changes to their own financial status and employment within the next 12 months.

Only one-fifth of Slovenians believe that the Slovene economic situation is better than that of other Europeans whilst 62% of them believe that it is worse.

The present EB shows the increased share of Slovenians who believe that they live a quality life – 45% believe so, and 40% disagree. In the last EB, measuring the quality of life (spring 2006), 40% of Slovenians declared that they live a quality life, and 39% not.

The priority for Slovenia is the fight against unemployment; The EU should deal with terrorism

Slovenians have classified reducing the unemployment rate (36%), improvement of the economic situation (23%) and taxation (21%) as the priority tasks to be dealt with by the Slovenian government. These three tasks were also listed in the same order of priority in the previous EB, but Slovenians have reduced their "share of importance" – by six percentage points for unemployment, by five percentage points for the economic situation and by 14 percentage points for taxation.

Slovenians have – like six months ago – classified the fight against terrorism (81%), scientific and technological research (79%), and defence and foreign affairs (73%) as the three priority areas for EU action.

II. SLOVENIA AND THE EU

Slovenia is benefiting from EU membership

A total of 58% of Slovenians believe that Slovenia's membership of the EU is positive compared to the 57% in the previous EB, while only 8% regard its membership as negative.

Taking everything into account, 75% of Slovenians are of the opinion that Slovenia has benefited from being a member of the European Union (in the autumn of 2006, the level was lower - 71%). EU membership has a positive effect on the country's security, economy and political stability. The majority of Slovenians believe the impact of accession to the European Union on Slovenia is far more positive than negative. 61% of Slovenians think that Slovenia will become even more influential in the EU in the future.

Slovenians think that their country's voice counts in the EU. 67% of Slovenians agreed with that statement (which is just above the EU average – 66%), and 29% do not agree, which is three percentage points above the EU27 average. Almost half of Slovenians (49%) believe that the interests of Slovenia are well taken into account in the EU; whilst 42% believe the opposite.

III. EUROPEAN UNION THROUGH THE EYES OF THE SLOVENIAN CITIZEN

Positive image of the EU

For the majority of Slovenians (62%), the EU has a positive image, which is exactly the same share as six months ago. The EU27 average is 52%. Only 6% of Slovenians see it as negative, which put Slovenia in second place. Only Lithuania has a smaller share of those for whom the EU has a negative image (5%).

For the majority of Slovenians, the EU means the Euro as a common currency to them personally. Freedom to travel, study and work anywhere in the EU, peace, economic prosperity and democracy are also important to Slovenians. Economy (37%), culture (23%), sport (21%), history and values (19%) are issues that, for the majority of Slovenians, create a feeling of community among European Union citizens the most.

The trust of Slovenians in the European institutions remains above the EU average. 66% of Slovenians trust the European Parliament and the European Central Bank, 61% trust the European Commission, and 57% of Slovenians trust the Council of the European Union.

Slovenians understand how the EU works and they feel well informed about EU matters

Slovenians are sure they understand how the EU works, because they are in first place with 64%. The share of those who believe that they understand how the EU works has increased by seven percentage points from the last EB. Slovenians are

placed in the first third of EU countries in terms of their concrete knowledge of the EU.

Slovenians believe they are well-informed about EU matters. When they are looking for information about the EU, its policies and its institutions, their primary sources are TV (73%), daily newspapers (44%), internet (37%) and radio (32%).

A high increase in the number of Slovenians who feel involved in European affairs; the share of Slovenians whose voice does not count in the EU is still high, but above the EU average

There is a high increase of Slovenians who feel very much involved in European affairs compared to the previous EB. Six months ago, 19% felt involved; now the share is 27%. There is also a 9 percentage point decrease in those who feel no involvement in European affairs. 69% of Slovenians still feel that they are not involved.

The majority of Slovenians (55%) think that their voice does not count in the EU. But the share of Slovenians (39%) who believe that their voice does count is four percentage points above the EU27 average.

IV. FUTURE

Further enlargement support decreased, but it is still above the EU average;

Two-thirds of Slovenians (67%) support the enlargement, which puts them within the EU27 in third place, together with the Romanians. Poland (76%) and Lithuania (68%) are in front. Support for enlargement has fallen seven percentage points among Slovenians, in the past six months, but still remains well above the EU average. Support for enlargement has increased by three percentage points. In the EU27 as a whole, 49% of citizens support further enlargement, whilst 39% are against it.

Very high support for European Monetary Union and high support for the Constitutional Treaty for EU;

Slovenians are, with 91%, the strongest supporters of the European Monetary Union.

Slovenia is in second place in the EU27 with 80% support for the Constitutional Treaty for the EU. In first place is Belgium (82%).

82% of Slovenians support the common foreign policy and 88% the common defence and security policy.

Mixed optimism about the future of the EU

Slovenians are very optimistic about the future of the EU. 80% of Slovenians are optimistic about the future of the EU, which puts Slovenia in second place within the EU27.

Despite this fact, Slovenians are not convinced that the EU will be a leading diplomatic power in the next 50 years. While 72% of Germans see the EU as a leading diplomatic world power 50 years from now, only 42% of Slovenians think so.

Slovenians are also not very optimistic about the EU as an economic power. Almost half of the respondents (45%) believe that the EU will only be a secondary economic power 50 years from now. This is 14 percentage points above the EU average. 37% of Slovenians believe the opposite. However, the majority of Slovenians (60%) believe that the Euro will be a more powerful currency than the dollar 50 years from now.

European institutions should focus on social issues in the future

Slovenians believe that European institutions in the coming years should deal more with social issues (39%), environmental issues (36%) and the fight against crime (28%). Almost one-fifth of Slovenians have indicated that the internal market (19%) and energy issues (18%) are important areas to work on in the future.

84% of Slovenians also agree that the EU should have a common immigration policy towards third-country citizens. This puts them in fourth place in the EU27, together with the Czechs.

Slovenians support the EU having its own Foreign Minister; a majority for an EU president

81% of Slovenians agree that the EU should have its own Foreign Minister. In regard to this question, Slovenia is in first place, together with Belgium. 57% of Slovenians believe that, in the future, the EU will have its own president directly elected by European citizens.

They should learn about the EU in schools

90% of Slovenians agree that children should learn about the EU and European initiatives in school. They support exchange programmes between European schools and universities and the creation of European schools and universities in all Member States. Three-quarters of Slovenians are also in favour of a common European curriculum and of a common European history book for pupils and students.

V. GLOBALISATION

Slovenes split over feelings towards globalisation

44% of Slovenes consider globalisation as positive, while, for 44%, globalisation has a negative connotation.

47% of Slovenians disagree with the following statement: "the European Union helps to protect us from the negative effects of globalisation." Six months ago, 41% of Slovenians disagreed with that statement. The majority of Slovenians (49%) agree that the European Union enables European citizens to profit from the positive effects

of globalisation. The share of such responses has decreased by 6 percentage points over the past six months.

VI. CLIMATE CHANGES

Very important role of the EU in climate change

Slovenians believe that the EU has a very important role in reducing global warming. With 97% they are in third place in the EU27. The vast majority of Slovenians (95%) also expect the European Union to urgently put new policies in place to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20% by the year 2020. Only Greeks have a larger response (98%).